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CORNELL DUBILIER ELECTRONICS INC

September 25, 1997

South Plainfield, NJ

The Cornell Dubilier Electronics Inc (CDE) site consists of a 25-acre property on Hamilton Boulevard in South Plainfield, Middlesex County, New Jersey. CDE tested transformer oils on the property for an unknown period of time until the company vacated the property in the 1961. The property is currently occupied by the Hamilton Industrial Park, which consists of approximately 15 small industries. It has been alleged that during CDE's period of operation, the company dumped transformer oil contaminated with polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) directly onto site soils. A former employee has claimed that the rear of the property was saturated with PCB-contaminated transformer oils and that transformers were also buried behind the facility during the same time period. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) personnel visited the site on March 12, 1985 and noted that a portion of the lot located in the back of the facility contained a black soil unnatural to the area. In 1988, a response letter was delivered to the NJDEP by a law firm representing CDE, which indicated that small accidental leaks or spills of PCBs occurred at the site property and that liquid-liquid-vapor degreasers were utilized during processes conducted at the site. Trichloroethylene (TCE) was the degreasing agent admitted to be used. The letter also indicated that residual wastes from the on-site processes may have been landfilled on the site property.

NJDEP collected soil, surface water and sediment samples as part of a September 11, 1986 Site Inspection (SI). Several metals, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), and a PCB were detected in the soil and sediment samples. Soil, surface water and sediments were also sampled as part of the Site Inspection Prioritization (SIP) conducted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on June 8, 1994. The results of the sample analyses indicated concentrations of PCBs and TCE in the site soils significantly above background levels. The site soils and sediments were resampled by EPA on February 29, 1996. PCB, alpha-Chlordane, and TCE were detected in the site soils sampled at levels significantly above background. PCBs were detected in sediment samples at levels significantly above background. The PCB contamination detected in the sediments of the unnamed tributary to Bound Brook documents the actual contamination of a water body designated by the State as an area for the protection and maintenance of aquatic life. The actual contamination of greater than 0.1 mile of wetland frontage in the unnamed tributary to Bound Brook was documented with the analytical data associated with this sampling event. At least two fisheries are known to exist within the target distance limit.

A significant number of people obtain their drinking water from the Middlesex and Elizabethtown Water Companies, both of which operate potable water supply wells within four miles of the site. The majority of the wells tap the Brunswick Shale Formation, although eight of Middlesex Water Company's 31 wells tap the overburden aquifer. Approximately 60 residential potable water supply wells were sampled and results indicated levels of TCE in excess of the Maximum Contaminant Level established for that substance.

In June of 1997, EPA collected soil samples from residential properties bordering the site. EPA also initiated a study to determine the impacts of contamination in the Bound Brook on human health and the environment. Water, sediment and fish samples were collected by the EPA from the Bound Brook and New Market Pond. Fish collected from the Bound Brook as part of this study were found to contain PCBs at higher levels than the amount allowed by the Food and Drug Administration. On August 8, 1997 NJDEP issued a Fish Advisory and posted signs warning people not to eat fish taken from these waters. EPA has expanded the study area for the evaluation of threats to human health to include the portions of the Bound Brook between New Market Pond and the Raritan River. EPA is currently collecting additional sediment samples to determine the extent of PCB contamination.

[The description of the site is based on information available at the time the site was scored. The description may change as additional information is gathered on the sources and extent of contamination. See 56 FR 5600, February 11, 1991, or subsequent FR notices.]